NAQCC News

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1. FEBRUARY SPRINT: Just a few days now as this newsletter is posted till our next sprint. We had two sprints in January. We didn't have time to say much in the last newsletter about the second sprint, our special 160M sprint. Conditions weren't all that good for the sprint, yet we came close to a record turnout for our 160M sprints with 49 logs(record is 54 in 2011). Complete results and certificate winners can be found on the web site in the usual place. There was something more significant about this sprint though. We had a new 'manager' for the sprint who took care of posting all the scores and soapboxes. He will continue to do the job for all our special (mW and 160M) sprints, and possibly in the future all of our sprints. He's Ki VA3PEN, and he did an excellent job on his initial venture into the job. That is a big help in relieving me of some of the tremendous amount of work running the NAQCC. Of course we have several other members helping out as well with various chores. But I'm getting off track, and will say more about that in the club news below.

Our February sprint is this coming Tuesday evening local USA times (8:30P ET, 7:30P CT, 6:30P MT, 5:30P PT) which of course is Wednesday February 15 from 0130-0330Z. Make plans to join in the fun and help us to cross the 100 log mark once again by sending in your results after you take part. It's easy to do if you use GenLog and our autologger as described in the Contests/Sprints section of the web site.

Speaking of the autologger, we made one change in it. It's a minor one, but important to us in processing scores. It now limits antenna descriptions to 40 characters in length. We had been getting some 'book length' descriptions that we had to edit down to fit in the results. All we really need is something very basic that allows those looking at the results to compare their scores more accurately with others. We only need something like these few examples:
dipole@35'
g5rv@50'

dpl@20',loop@60'
110' attic rnd wire
3 el yagi@50'
That's enough of a description. Now those folks who use g5rv's for example can compare their score to other folks with g5rv's at a similar height. Of course that doesn't take location into account (hilltop vs. valley, etc.), but it's better than not knowing at all what the competition is using as an antenna.

If you're new to the sprints, please read the complete sprint rules carefully so you'll know exactly what we need in the form of logs. If you use GenLog correctly, then submit via the autologger, it will take you the least amount of time to compile and submit your log and report. Just a few minutes in most cases. If you have any doubts about using GenLog, check out our illustrated tutorial on using the program.

There is a plain text file (one for each continental USA time zone) of upcoming sprint dates for 2012. See the 'Print a Schedule' page in the 'Contests/Sprints' section of the web site. Print it out and post it somwhere prominently so you won't miss a single one of our sprints.

Read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

2. JANUARY CHALLENGE RESULTS: Our prelude to the end of the world challenge coming up in December was a simple one with fewer letters overall than usual, and it prompted a big turnout. With still a few hours left for submission of results as this is posted, we have had 12 folks send in their results so far. It only took half the month or less for some of the folks to complete the challenge.

Full Challenge results can always be found here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- HELP WANTED! One of my (K3WWP) resolutions for 2012 is to cut back on my NAQCC (and other) workload(s). Thanks to a couple of folks who answered our help wanted ads here, some tasks have now been farmed out as follows.

Ki VA3PEN as mentioned above has now taken over the task of handling the posting of scores and soapboxes for our special mW and 160M sprints.

Jerry W7GAH will be doing our every-five-day checks of the FCC database for member address changes and call sign changes.

Jerry VE6CPP is going to take care of coming up with a new poll for the web site which will change on the tenth of each month. His first poll has just been posted. A new poll will be posted the tenth of each month. If you haven't done so already, check it out via the main page of the web site and cast your vote.

Of course those three wonderful and kind members are additions to our other officers and helpers who've been with us for various lengths of time - VA3RJ, KD2MX, AA4W, K5DUZ, W3IRS, SWL-25, W2LJ, KC2EGL, N8XMS, AF4LB, MW3YMY, WD0K, KE9DR, K3RLL. The following folks have helped out in the past - N3IJR, VA3RKM, KC8FS(SK), W5RJ(SK), EI2GP, K4IWL, N9GOD, 2U0BGE, WB0OEW, WB9TPA. I hope I didn't leave anyone out.

Thanks go out to all our officers and helpers who keep the club going strong.

Once our 3 new helpers get completely settled into their jobs, which shouldn't take long, we'll see if we can farm out some more tasks.

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (Feb 25) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club. Cheap refers only to the price, not the quality of the cards. They are beautiful and a great way to show your pride in being a NAQCC member. See the main page of the web site to find out how to purchase your own cards. We had our first winner in 6 issues when K1SHR found his call in the last issue, #159. That's a total of only 9 winners in the 65 previous hidden calls we've had to date. Will #66 be a winner in this issue?

4. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have four chapters - European, Minnesota, Texas, and Western Pennsylvania. We're looking forward to expanding that roster. Chapters are more or less self-governing local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

NAQCC EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy (13K)

Any items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://naqcc-eu.org/

NAQCC MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

Any items in this section are from Chapter President Rich WD0K unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to pix_email_wd0k .

Merlin, KD0V, #2002 reports the following: I have completed four consecutive months of at least one QRP QSO per day. This included five days portable operation from Gun Flint Lake MN in poor WX conditions and high winds. One of my more memorable QSOs was with WB7NZI, Frank of Blaine, WA. We chatted for almost half hour with very stable conditions.

In my experience, hams will often sign with you when they realize you are QRP and some don't even bother to come back. Sometimes all you have to do is mention you are running QRP and instantly they have to help the YL or walk Fido.

My QRP string has been an interesting adventure, not to mention the people experience. QRP works! And I look forward to further QSOs. Will I find you in my log? Maybe! 72s from Merlin, KD0V.

I had fun this January working on a Oak Hills WM-2 power/watt meter. I got the kit from my friend's estate (K0HJC/SK) a few weeks ago. All the parts were there except the assembly instructions. I couldn't locate them so Bob, K9OSC #3894, mentioned that I should just use the ole ohm meter. So after studying the pics which I got, I finally got the board and controls wired. The first time under power it did what it was supposed to do! Alignment was a piece of cake. Now I have a nice watt meter for the milliwatt sprint. It sure can't hurt and it is nice to get that last bit of RF into the ole wire.

I missed the January sprint but hope to do better in February. Just because I missed the sprint does not mean that I couldn't attend the breakfast. Nine of us got together to hash over the past sprint results, discuss what we heard on the air, tell stories of how we broke that pileup and brag about our latest packet from the QSL buro.

Speaking of the NAQCC breakfast, this month we will be getting together south of St.Paul in Lakeville. The Perkins Restraunt will host our get together on Feb 17th at 10:00AM. The address is 17387 Kenyon Ave, just off the 35 interstate on CO. RD 50. See you there! All are welcome and bring a story!

On the local scene here, K9OSC informs me that he has finished the ARCI group's WAS, acquiring certificate #36. Congrats Bob! He also finished the NAQCC February challenge. If Bob keeps pounding brass at this rate, I am going to have to look into the "Brass Futures" market...HA!

OK Gang! That just about wraps it up here as I have run out of news for now. Will say 72s and will listen for ur signal in the sprint. Rich, WD0K, #664.

NAQCC TEXAS CHAPTER:

Any items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

The East Texas QRS Net (ETN) is meeting each Monday evening at 1900 CST (0100 UTC) on 3561 KHz. The ETN net is open to all comers, not just stations in the Texas area, so if you hear the net in session please check-in. Since the move to 80m in December, stations from TX, AR, OK, KS, MO, CO, AL, IL, IN and FL have successfully checked into the net. Check the

weekly NAQCC net e-mail for the latest ETN info.

Mark your calendar for the upcoming NAQCC Sprint next Tuesday evening (Texas time), Feb. 14th. The turnout by Texas hams in the Sprints has been good, but there is always room for more so please join in on the fun!

Remember that all NAQCC members located in Texas (337 at last count) are automatically members of the Texas Chapter. We would love to hear from you about any of your recent ham activities, new QRP rig or antenna.

NAQCC WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER:

Any items in this section are from John K3WWP unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**
All chapter news can be found ONLY here in this section of the newsletter.

Mike KC2EGL and John K3WWP had an impromptu get together on Saturday February 4th. That was an extra one in addition to our usual monthly meeting. We didn't do much in the way of ham radio related things, just had more or less a social visit (food included, of course). Also I showed off my new computer I had gotten just the day before. Our regular get together this month will be on President's day when we'll check out the current status of our NAQCC prizes. We're also going to the Pittsburgh Mills Mall to do a bit of computer shopping at Best Buy and having a meal at Appleby's while we're there. Then we'll probably check out the ham bands for a while and do some more pre-planning for our Messier Marathon late next month.

5. NAQCC QRS NETS:

News and net reports in this section are from QRS Net Manager Dan AF4LB unless otherwise credited.
Dan will handle all Net related material at this email address:
pix email af4lb

Dan AF4LB is undergoing surgery in February, and is still looking for a replacement NCS for the Thursday evening ECN. If no one steps forward, we'll have to suspend that net till Dan can do it again after his recovery. That's unfortunate because the net was just starting to pick up steam. Please someone step forward to help out! If you can do so, email Dan and let him know. I believe we need someone starting next Thursday if I understand Dan's surgery schedule correctly. Surely with over 5,860 members, someone should be able to step forward to help out. It's not a hard job at all. In fact it's fun.

Latest NAQCC QRS Nets schedule can be found on the NAQCC web site here.

Recent Net Activity report:(No report received for this issue)

Net Name (Abbreviation)
Date(UTC) NCS Participants

NAQCC Main QRS Net (NQN)

NAQCC East Texas QRS Net (ETN)

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS net (RMR) - Tuesday

NAQCC Rocky Mtn Regional/Continental QRS net (RMR) - Thursday

NAQCC East Coast QRS Net (ECN)

NAQCC Pacific NorthWest QRS Net (PNW)

For more net info, see CW Assistance/QRS Nets on the web site.

6. NAQCC CW ASSISTANCE PROJECT:

Items in this section are from CW Assistance Project Coordinator Ron K5DUZ (L) unless otherwise credited.
If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact:
K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

Ron is still involved in another work project and will be unavailable to write info for this section for a while longer. If you would like to aD3k write something that you feel will be helpful to our members in learning CW or improving CW skills, please feel free to do so.

7. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT NAQCC #2062. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon has appeared in each of our even-numbered newsletters ever since their debut in Issue #058, November 17, 2007.

8. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Erv Bates W8ERV #3427

I got my start in Amateur Radio in a round about way, entering first through the CB corridor, on my Grandfather's 23 channel Pace in the mid-1970's. Since I also had an uncle in the hobby, I was intrigued by the electronics he had amassed, and I finally got my Technician license in July of 1994. I upgraded to Extra before code was taken out of the picture in the late 90's and got involved through that process with QRO and QRP operation.

Ellis Whitehead, a good friend and the man who elmered me in CW got me hooked rather easily, and my first solo CW contact came on March 19, 1999. Although it was QRO, it was still my most memorable contact! KG0RD will forever remain among my favorite Amateurs, simply because he took the time to slow wayyyyy down for me, making sure that my first CW contact was complete. I've learned many times that it always pays to do what is necessary to help a fellow Ham-because it comes back to you!

My rig is an oldie but a goody, and it is the rig I made my first HF contact on (third party), with Carl (K8YHH) in 1995. That Yaesu 757 GX2 is a workhorse! Just over a year ago I talked Carl into selling it to me after my 7 year old son, Josh made HIS first HF contact on it during Field Day in 2010. Interestingly, Carl also sold me my favorite Vibroplex iambic (not sure how old it is), which has since been reconditioned with custom paddles from another elmer, Gregg (WB8LZG). Are you seeing a pattern here?

I am involved as much as possible with DXing and contesting, and I am currently working on my DXCC Century Club Award. I've gotten others, but this is the biggie for me. hi hi Since I didn't complete it last year, I will aim to do so in 2012.

Along with Amateur Radio, I am a husband to my wonderful wife of 25 years (Laurie), and we have three children. Amanda is 22, Michelle is 13, and Josh is 9.

I work as a Certified Nursing Assistant, with the hope of completing my RN Nursing degree soon, but nobody really cares about work...especially when you have Ham Radio to enjoy, right?

73, Erv.

9. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Examples might include, but not limited to, antenna projects, QRP and/or SDR equipment, tuners, battery technology, keyers, logging, or other related topic of interest to the QRP community.
Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is Jan 26. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** I guess I have two big news items here for this issue. First of all on February 6, I ended one full year of making at least TWO QRP/CW/Simple Wire Antenna QSOs each and every day. I decided that was long enough and discontinued that streak since I (and others) felt it didn't really prove or disprove anything more than making ONE QRP/CW/Simple Wire Antenna QSO each and every day. I've been doing that since August 5, 1994. That streak stands at 6,398 consecutive days as of February 9, 2012, and will continue until something beyond my control brings it to an end.

The other news is that I got a new computer here. I got it on February 3 which was almost 10 years to the day when I last got a new computer. Compared to the new one, that one was pretty primitive although it still works fine, and I probably will use it as an upgrade to the shack computer now. This new HP computer is truly a speed demon. It's hard to give an exact processor speed since all new computers have multi-core processors and you can't just say it runs at 3.2 GHz or 4.0 GHz any longer. So I'll just say it is --*FAST*--. It has 8 GB of RAM and a 1TB hard drive which with my 0.5TB external hard drive I have 1.5TB of hard drive storage now. The operating system is the fabulous Windows 7. It's a pretty radical difference in interface from XP, and it took a little time to get used to, especially the Start menu. However I now have it well under control and really like it very much.

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.